

SCIPIT Meeting #1

2007–2012 Stormwater Capital Improvement Program

Involvement Team

March 28, 2006

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

BOCC Training Room

Sixth Floor, Clark County Public Services Building

Vancouver WA

Public SCIPIT Members in Attendance:

Tim Crawford, Robert Even, Donna Hale, Dave Howard, Bill Owen, Patty Page, Art Stubbs, Virginia van Breemen, Ronald Wilson

Staff SCIPIT Members in Attendance:

Richard Drinkwater, Heath Henderson, Jeff Schnabel, Karen Streeter, Scott Wilson

Other Attendees:

Jerry Barnett, Jim Gladson, Dave Howe, Trista Kobluskie, Tim Kraft, Earl Rowell, Fereidoon Safdari, Cindy Stienbarger, Rod Swanson

Introduction

Gladson noted that the purpose of the Stormwater Capital Improvement Project Involvement Team is to create a ranked list of stormwater capital projects for 2007-2012 in order to advise the Board of Clark County Commissioners (BOCC) on selection and funding of projects. The BOCC will also provide guidance to the group. A primary goal of the team is to solicit public input on ranking and funding projects.

The process will be repeated next year and then every two years after.

Review SCIPIT Notebooks

Barnett reviewed the notebooks given to each member:

- Agenda
- Roster
- Public Involvement Program
- SCIPIT Goal and Purpose
- Slides of tonight's presentation
- Draft Project Evaluation Criteria and related documents, including a budget estimate

Purpose and Process

Barnett stated that the SCIPIT team would discuss and refine the draft Project Evaluation Criteria, then use the criteria to rank submitted stormwater capital projects, and then finally program existing funds for the next six years.

The final products will be 1) a process for evaluating stormwater projects, including public input, and 2) a ranked list of projects similar to the Transportation Improvement Program document.

A current unranked list of projects is derived from staff submittals and stormwater basin planning in the Whipple Creek watershed. The final list may include projects from any basin, though less data will be available to evaluate those projects. The team welcomes submittals from citizens and staff.

Howard asked how the team could rank projects without knowing basin priorities. Barnett replied that a number of important projects are not in Whipple Creek, the current priority basin.

Barnett stated that the criteria should be general enough to apply to any watershed. They should be transparent. After the group establishes the criteria and the relative weight of each, it should test them against a trial list of projects. Owen asked if revising the criteria after testing them equates to the end justifying the means. Barnett responded no, the criteria need to be evaluated to see if they work; if the test shows that several inconsequential projects are ranked highly, then the criteria probably need revision. Swanson likened it to calibrating a model. Henderson said the TIP uses a similar process; the test may simply indicate that weighting factors of certain criteria are too high or too low.

Funding

Barnett said that the funding available for stormwater capital improvements comes from the annual Clean Water Fee. The spreadsheet "Clean Water Available for Capital Projects-22 March 2006" in the Projects/Criteria section of the SCIPIT notebook summarizes projected revenue and resources up to 2012.

Owen asked if revenue from the Clean Water Fee paid by Washington State Department of Transportation, which is earmarked solely for WSDOT-related stormwater projects, is included in the revenue projection. Rowell indicated that the "Resources Available for Capital Projects" field on the spreadsheet does not include revenue from WSDOT.

Barnett said that the team would rank projects without regard to ability to fund them. However, the SCIPIT will look for alternative funding opportunities beyond the Clean Water Fee. The language of the new draft NPDES permit recognizes more types of projects that improve water quality, so the county can consider building a wider set of projects with revenue from the Clean Water Fee.

Public Involvement Program

Barnett reviewed the Public Involvement Program. Eight members of the public are part of the SCIPIT. The process includes four public meetings, media releases, general mailing to interested groups, email notification, an upcoming web site, meeting updates, and a speaker's bureau for presentations to interested civic groups.

Project Evaluation Criteria

Barnett said that the list of criteria (page two of the Projects/Criteria section of the notebook) is a draft, established by staff working from the Clean Water Commission interim criteria. Gladson stated that the group should discuss whether the components of the list are logical and whether or not the relative weight of each criterion is acceptable.

Barnett indicated that the group would review the criteria section by section.

Mitigation for Stormwater Impacts from Existing Development

Henderson asked if the two main components of this section, 1) control localized urban flooding and 2) mitigate effects of existing development, derived directly from the NPDES permit? Barnett answered no. Kraft responded that they came from staff's goals for watershed planning.

Control localized urban flooding set

Owen asked if the Clean Water Fee could be used to build projects that address only localized flooding. Barnett replied that some projects on the list might not be fundable using the Clean Water Fee; those are good opportunities to look for grants and partnerships. Stubbs asked if a project would be dropped from the list if no funding were available. Barnett responded no, projects below it on the list might be built first if they are fundable;

the project without available funding would wait on the list until monies were found to build it. Kraft concurred that a number one rank would not guarantee that a project would be built first.

Safdari asked why “addresses a known flooding problem” receives 5 points while “addresses flooding that threatens major transportation route/critical facility” receives 4 points. Kraft responded that a project that meets the latter automatically also meets the former, meaning that it would receive 9 points.

Howard asked if the points are “up to” the number of points, allowing for gradation in individual perception of the severity of the problem. Kraft replied no.

Owen asked how a critical facility is defined in “addresses flooding that threatens major transportation route/critical facility.” Drinkwater listed hospital, house. R. Wilson stated that safety of people and homes should be considered. Streeter stated that structural damage to a home should be included.

Barnett asked if anything besides flooding that threatens homes, critical roads, hospitals, etc. would be defined as a problem. Rowell clarified that the county is concerned about all property flooding, however Clean Water Fee revenue is required to be used for NPDES permit compliance, which does not include drainage problems. Gladson suggested combining the two criteria to read “Addresses known flooding that threatens infrastructure or safety.” Henderson suggested giving more weight to addressing flooding of public infrastructure than to flooding of property.

Mitigate effects of existing development set

Howard asked why 20 acres was chosen in “provides/enhances detention for >20 acres of existing development”? Kraft responded that it is a good, sizeable number and common in development. Howard asked how big the typical subdivision in Clark County is. He asked the group to think about what the right break might be.

Swanson noted that the break seems reasonable to him and that testing the criteria on the trial list of projects would help test that hypothesis. Safdari stated that a typical subdivision has 30-35 lots at 5-8 thousand square feet. Howard said that 20 acres is very large, then, and should perhaps be reduced. Swanson replied that the criterion considers a developed area, which might contain more than a single subdivision.

Drinkwater suggested that the area contributing to the stormwater problem is more important the acreage of the existing subdivision; some subdivisions drain in more than one direction.

Drinkwater talked about FEMA flood maps, which are more than 25 years old, and wondered how that might affect application of the criteria.

Provide Effective and Efficient Mitigation for New Development and Redevelopment

The group discussed the definition of a Focused Public Investment Area. Henderson suggested giving more points to “Provides new facility within a Focused Public Investment Area.” Streeter suggested adding the phrase “shovel-ready” to it.

Kraft stated that three criteria might need more detail. For example, “provides infrastructure for new development” might mean providing a regional stormwater facility – building infrastructure prior to development in order to encourage it.

Owen asked if the maximum of 25 points for the section is attainable, since “provides infrastructure for new development” and “provides infrastructure for redevelopment” are mutually exclusive. Kraft replied that a regional facility could provide services to both by replacing an existing facility, which then could be redeveloped.

Howard asked why the county would consider prioritizing projects that aid new development over projects that address the huge backlog of needed retrofits. Barnett replied that the BOCC specifically requested consideration of

mitigation for new development. Schnabel said that projects for new development would help avoid more additions to the backlog. Howard noted that the new NPDES permit would require stricter stormwater regulation of new development; that is one mechanism to prevent additions to the backlog. The Clean Water Fee is the only funding source he knows of to remediate stormwater problems in currently developed areas. He stated that he is not advocating either position.

Stubbs asked if stormwater mitigation for new development could be a joint venture with the developer. Barnett replied that it might be.

Rowell asked if Howard advocates system development charges, or impact fees, for new development. Howard responded that the stormwater management requirements must be high enough to be effective; new development should pay its own way.

Promote Innovative Funding and Implementation of Projects

Kraft stated that the section is a catchall, but includes important “extras” that might make the difference between two otherwise similarly ranked projects.

Hale suggested adding a set of criteria for use of innovative techniques, including Low Impact Development (LID).

Permitting set

Streeter suggested editing each criterion to read, “...exempt from permit requirements.” Hale noted that the Department of Fish and Wildlife permits do not always require a SEPA or a shoreline, through the streamlined process.

Henderson suggested adding “is consistent with objectives of other departments and agencies, such as the Endangered Species Act program (ESA) and the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB)” to help locate funding. Schnabel concurred and stated that the stormwater basin planning process itself emphasizes coordinating with other regulatory agencies and planning process, such as Water Resources Inventory Areas planning (WRIA).

Promote the SWM through public education/involvement/demonstration set

Owen asked for revision of the wording because “SWM” is unclear.

Ownership/Access set

Schnabel suggested increasing the point value because the constraint of buying new land is great. Page concurred and suggested adding “willing landowners.” Howard suggested that willing landowners are out there.

Leverages Resources set

Henderson asked if points should be given if a project **can** be funded with Clean Water Fees. Barnett replied that funding should not be an issue in the criteria.

Protect and Restore Natural Watershed Functions

Kraft noted that the criteria in this section reflect the intent of a stormwater management program. He said that points for LID that Hale mentioned above are in this section.

Streeter stated that ongoing maintenance costs should be included in this section and perhaps should be scored negatively. Barnett replied that the problems that projects remediate or prevent cost money, so the elimination of those costs should be worth points. S. Wilson said that some structures are much more expensive to maintain than others are; he used filter vaults as an example. He said that Public Works maintenance and operations division could come up with price/acre for mitigation sites. Streeter suggested adding a criterion for maintenance costs.

Owen stated that the maximum point value for the section is 50, which is twice the value for the flooding/existing development section. Therefore, a project that improves watershed function can rank higher than one that

remediates flooding. Is that appropriate? He also noted that the section contains many more criterion than any other and is extremely detailed. Why not generalize more, and reduce the number of categories?

Gladson asked if the group's consensus is that the section is too long. Hale replied no, prioritizing projects that protect or restore natural watershed function would more effectively manage stormwater and be more cost effective.

Gladson asked if 50 points is too high for the section. Stubbs said that a project would seldom receive all 50.

Protect surface water and ground water quality set

Owen said that “removes existing pollution sources” gives points to any project that removes any pollutant. He suggested linking points to projects that address known problems for the water body by referencing the 303(d) list. Gladson asked if the criteria themselves draw out water bodies that are 303(d) listed or that have TMDLs.

All Criteria

Howard suggested reviewing the entire list of criteria to compare and balance the maximum points for each section.

Owen suggested that the Public Works Mission and Goals could help. Barnett concurred and added that the Water Resources section goals would help, too.

Project Submittal Forms

Barnett said that the Project Submittal Form would be finalized by the next meeting, but the draft form can be used until then. The public, staff, and the SCIPIT are invited to submit projects. Submittals may be considered in this year’s process or in next year’s. There is no deadline.

Henderson asked if a high number of submittals from one watershed might help the county prioritize basins for stormwater basin planning. Owen cautioned that public interest might vary by watershed, so quantity of submittals may not accurately reflect the distribution of problems. Gladson suggested using quality as a trigger.

Barnett stated that the Project Submittal Form is not intended to supply all of the information needed to evaluate a project using the criteria.

Make submittals to Trista Kobluskie, Public Works Water Resources.

Action Items

- 1) consider the 20 acre split for development – all
- 2) consider whether the two flooding-related criteria are separate, and how to word them – all
- 3) consider whether projects that promote development goals are appropriate – all
- 4) consider wording of the permit section – all
- 5) consider relative point values and section maximums – all
- 6) bring Clark County Public Works Mission and Goals statement to next meeting – Barnett
- 7) bring Water Resources Mission statement to next meeting – Rowell

Next Meeting

SCIPIT Meeting #2

May 9, 2006

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

BOCC Training Room

Sixth Floor, Clark County Public Services Building

Vancouver WA

The goals for the next meeting are to finalize the criteria and then to review identified stormwater problems.

Members should bring their notebooks to each meeting.

Howard stated that he is retiring from the Washington State Department of Ecology, and another person may take his place at the SCIPIT. Barnett asked him to consider attending as a citizen.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trista Kobluskie